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## OUR PULPIT.

## WORDS AN INDEX OF THE HEART.

BY DEAN BRADLEY, WESTMINSTER ABBEY, LONDON, ENGLAND.

But I say unto you that for every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment: for by thy words thou shall be justified and by thy words thou shall be condemned. (Matthew 12: 36-37)

Taken as I have read them and as they are often quoted—and taken, that is, as detached from the whole passage which leads up to and explains them—the words may be looked on as among the most difficult and perplexing of our Lord's recorded sayings, and whatever may be the result of a critical examination of their true meaning, the remained apparent difficulty, their urgent claim upon our attention must still remain undispelled: for they cannot be set aside as concerned with some remote and untried field of human duties, when they are so placed across the very path of our daily life. They challenge a hearing with a clearness and distinctness which we cannot evade. If in any sense it is true that for every idle word we shall give account in the day of judgment, it is a truth that deserves our serious and attentive consideration. What, let me ask at once, would be the meaning which we should naturally attach to the words?

Would it not be almost inevitable that we should understand by every idle word everything said without any definite or deliberate end in view—everything that is superfluous or without special point and meaning? Is not the phrase which the Pharisees used, when they said that the words uttered merely to amuse or to pass a vacant hour, but would extend far beyond these, and would penetrate to all unguarded expressions, even in our most serious moments? And does it not seem at first sight as though all such utterances were condemned, and would rise up against us, if we accept the teaching at the most solemn and momentous crisis of human existence?

And so, however, that may not only cast a chill upon our hearts but perplex at once our conscience and our understanding? And our perplexity seems to grow, as we repeat to ourselves the words. Our Lord's teaching is not always and never cheerful assuring and comforting. There are other elements in it, even that which we commonly call sweetness and expediency which we cannot explain away; and it imposes sacrifices on the human soul which we may call tremendous. Wives and children, father and mother, and possessions here, and the right hand and the right eye there, are named as things to be given up or left behind for His sake, or for higher interests; and yet language like this, involving the immediate sacrifice of all that is nearest and most dear for a great cause and a higher life, man can understand. We can recognize, if we cannot submit to, its uplifting and inspiring influence, but the words which we are considering to day seem to contradict the general scope and spirit of Christ's teaching and to lead us not upwards or onwards, but backwards and backwards—back to another and a narrower system, down to an atmosphere of minute laws and vexatious restrictions, from which He came to all men, unto a gospel of large-hearted freedom.

How, then, we may ask, are we to account for the fact—if fact it be—that the preacher of a new and more spiritual covenant, in this, His most solemn discourse on the use and abuse of God's great gift of speech, passes by many, says nothing of falsehood, nothing of impurity, nothing of profanity, and fastens only upon what is free, unpremeditated, colorless—as it were—and spontaneous? Can it be that the Son of Man, whose very first miracle was wrought amidst the mirth and jests of an Eastern marriage feast, who went about as His enemies said, eating and drinking with His human kind, whose tenderest words were spoken over young children, to whom sport and play in language, as in limb, is life itself, would seal man's lips against all play of fancy, every sally of mirthfulness or tenderness, against the common coinage of language so essential to the very existence of the social life which He hallowed and sanctified by His daily presence? Are all words wrong that are not grave, serious, well considered, like the coins well-weighed and carefully measured and tested before issued from the mint within? Is there something sinful in all the interchange of lighter talk, which by the very law of our being is the natural repose of weary brain, and the natural relief to the burdened breast? Or is it possible that He who penetrated beneath the narrow and rigid precepts of the older law, and brought to light the spirit which gave them a wider application and an eternal obligation, would have called upon His disciples to cramp and paralyze their souls by the incessant discipline of constraint and regulated utterances, to count and deliberate their little words, and to overlook—as on such a system men were sure to do—the weightier matters of the heart and the imagination? Is it possible that He, in whom the Pharisees recognized their most uncompromising enemy, would have spoken

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in the tone and spirit of the Pharisee? Where, lastly, under such a system of repression and restriction would there have been room for the outburst of enthusiasm and faith and love that was to subdue the world and to break out again after age, for the spirit of a St. Paul, who could bid his disciples stand fast in the freedom with which Christ had made them free? (Matthew 12: 36-37)

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Our neighborhood is greatly revived. We have had a glorious meeting at the Moore Meeting House, resulting in the conversion of fifteen souls, several of whom were men (of families) over forty years of age. Last Sunday I baptized six into the Baptist Church who connected them selves with the church at Bonneville, and six others awaiting baptism.

The baptismal scene was very impressive, while the baptismal song, "Jordan's Banks I Stand," and young converts coming up straight way, is pleasing. The revival continues, the meeting conducted by myself and a young lad, Chas., a son of the Methodist Church.

Oct. 12th  
A. T. Saxon  
Delegates to General Association

which meets with "Rocky" Springs, Guardiana, Yazoo County, on Friday before the 1st Lord's day in November, and will last on the 1st, 2nd, & 3rd. to Negro City, and will be returned at the third, fare of presentation or printed certificate of the Secretary to the Agent at Ya-za.

Excuse this for general trip, will be so. I am authorized to make this statement.

H. F. SPROTS

Pleasant Hill Church

Our annual meeting began September 14th, and continued six days. Elders H. Z. Jenkins, W. H. Schill and F. W. Early (the pastor), the deacon, and the trustees. The meeting opened in the morning, and the new candidates were baptized in the afternoon. Baptism during the two meetings.

Ed. F. W. Early who has been serving the church eight years, a pastor, was a man most amiable, a man of much tact, and a man of much ability to supply the church with another year.

C. M. B.  
Washington Parish, La. Oct. 9th

Issue

To the Pearl River Association.

I have just received the recent issue of Pearl River Association Hoping it was best for the cause I can say. But the brothers or sisters in the church wish they may reden their pledges. There by those who have not returned their pledges. With greatest thanks to God, the brethren and the church, I am truly.

J. G. CHASTAIN  
Lafayette, Ky. Oct. 1st

M. M. W.

Yours

Y

## HOME CIRCLE.

Conducted By Mrs. M. T. Gammell

### POETRY.

#### SPEAK NAE ILL.

Other people have their faults,  
And so have you as well;  
But all you chance to see or hear,  
Ye have no right to tell.  
If ye can speak o' good,  
Take care, and see and feel;  
Earth has all too much o' woe,  
And not enough o' weal.  
Be careful that ye make me strife,  
Wi' meddling tongue and brain;  
For ye will find enough to do,  
If ye but look at home.  
If ye can speak o' good,  
Oh, dinna speak at all;  
For there is grief and woe enough  
On this terrestrial ball.  
If ye should feel like picking flaws,  
Ye better go, I ween;  
And read the book that tells ye all,  
About the mote and beam.  
Dinna lend a ready ear,  
To gossip or to strife,  
Or perhaps I'll make for ye  
Na' funny thing of life.

### EDITORIAL.

#### FOOLISH JESTING--NOT CONVENIENT.

It is not of those harmless jests which come with the sparkle of wit or the twinkle of polished and courteous repartee, that form the lighter phases of conversation that we wish to deal; but with the jests about things that ought to be saved, the jests that wound and vex through all one's moral and spiritual nature.

That they are often more "from the want of thought than want of heart," so far as an intentional wounding of hearers is concerned we are ready to admit; but we do claim that underlying the jesting is a spirit of rebellion against God, a defiance of his moral law. Only recently we were pained to hear two young men (sons of pious Christian women) quote with blasphemous accent words which had been used to ascribe the honor of spiritual victories to God.

The injury done to the moral nature of those who jest at sacred things is incalculable. The flippant mention of sacred things paves the way for a swift decent into the realm of profanity; but the person taking that first step does not stop to analyze the moral tone of mind that found vent in the jest. Perhaps it was to cover my emotion wrought by compunction of conscience, perhaps to parry a thrust made by some loving hearted soldier of the cross, with the sword of the Spirit, and in effect the jester said to the Spirit's wounding, "To thy way for this time, when I have a more convenient reason I will call for thee."

As we write, memory pictures the face of a man who all through life jested about sacred things, no text of Scripture, no appeal from the desk, no prayer of the faithful escaped the shafts of his wit; he could provoke a smile from the most serious in spite of their deepest anxiety for the salvation of sinners.

Little did he think he was gradually callousing his conscience until no voice of love and mercy could penetrate his dead soul; but when the frosts of many winters had made his head hoary, he laid him down in death a scoffer at religion. He began by being a jester, he ended a scoffer. Few men become so abandoned in wickedness that they can openly scoff at their "mother's God." The love of mother makes the name of Deity sacred to hearts hardened in sin, but "making a mock at Christianity" and jesting at things sacred are insidious species of skepticism which are equivalent to scorning "a mother's God." To-day in a distant State there lives a man who will carry a regret in his heart to his dying day because he turned aside all appeals to his conscience with jests, and though he promised himself, "some day for mother's sake I'll heed these things and be done with my jesting," yet the good mother went home to glory and left him an alien and stranger from the Commonwealth of spiritual Israel.

If we could catch the ear of all the young, of both sexes, we would say never jest about sacred things, do not speak lightly of Christ, God the Father or the Holy Spirit, and be sure not to lay the Bible under tribute to sustain your reputation for wit.

A Christian who had indulged in the practice last mentioned, said when he laid on his death bed, "I have winged the arrows of my wit with misapplied quotations from God's word until I have shot away all the sweet and tender and precious significance that used to cluster around the promises, they now bring no cheering balm to my perturbed Spirit." There seems at times to be an epidemic of foolish and vain jesting which the sacred writer urges the church to avoid, adding it is not convenient, (suitable.) The habit is drifted into as incisively as one breathes the air; but does not this show the necessity for asking the boon craved by the Psalmist: "Set a watch oh Lord before my lips that I sin not with my tongue."

### TEMPERANCE.

Miss Willard says, and rightly "No voter can help holding one of the four following relationships to the saloons in his community: Ignorance, apathy, complicity or protest."

In speaking of the temperance contest, Mrs. Lathrop utters truly helpful words when she says, "Any contest which touches the kingdom of Christ, the welfare of humanity, and the salvation of souls, must of necessity sweep out into the unseen and lay hold of spiritual forces." Wherein lies the power of the temperance movement? Truth uttered by trenchant pen and eloquent lips, to which the world most needs to pause and listen. Organizations composed of men who are willing to be pointed for that truth, and organizations of women, who by prayer and social influence, seek to advance it. All these, and more, but back of them, in their breathing through them, is God himself. Divine influence, but Divinity in person is in the field where eternal right is at stake, and souls are lost or won.

My friends, this national issue is before the American people, and the golden calf is enthroned in the midst of an enslaved and warped public opinion. What is to be done? Go among the worshippers and bow to the king with them in the name of expediency, or, in the hope of saving for the young men of Columbus, Pray God to keep them upon the line which they have chosen during the past year. Pray for these young men. Ask God to hold them in the hollow of His hand. The saloons are ready to entrap them. The saloons where numbered is last never to be regained. Men and women of Mississippi, you who do not look through a glass darkly, remember Columbus, the city deluged again with rivers of rainous drink, and if the time should come when you can help her, put your shoulder bravely to the wheel.

MISSISSIPPIAN.

time this meets your eye, dear reader, the saloons of Columbus will be in full blast. The lovely streets of that city will be filled again with idle vagrants and drunken hoodlums. The saloons will, as in the past, hold high carnival, and send out their poisonous breath over the city which had scarcely known freedom, ere the chains of drink had manacled her again. In strange contrast to the manufacturers of drunkards are the magnificent schools of Columbus, four hundred girls in the I. I. and C. and clever, hundred girls and boys in the public schools. The saloons are a plague upon these. Every day the pupils of the public schools pass the doors of the saloons, every day the pupils see and hear the products and the language which whiskey makes. This is a rare theme for thought, which we will dwell upon in a future article. We desire to notice particularly now, this idea: what will these open saloons have upon the Y. M. C. A., and the young men of the city not members of the club?

Here is a mighty temptation hurled in the pathway of these young men, many of whom once knew the thrall of drink. Think of it, scarcely had the possibilities opened for the young men of Columbus, promising glorious future, as results of sobriety and virtue, than the saloons, more dangerous than the abominations of wanton vice, flash their blinding lights all along the way, and men into their ruinous gifts. Many are the anxious hearts now in Columbus, mothers, whose tears had ceased to flow, are heavy-hearted. "What if the saloons should entrap my boy again?" is the burden of their thought. Who can measure the evil that has come to Columbus from the opening of the saloons again? Who can count the victims to be ensured this year and the next? Christian men and women of Mississippi, pray for the young men of Columbus. Pray God to keep them upon the line which they have chosen during the past year. Pray for these young men. Ask God to hold them in the hollow of His hand.

The saloons are ready to entrap them. The saloons where numbered is last never to be regained. Men and women are kept in the saloons in the morning until eight o'clock, and are then tractored to a group of weavers seemed much concerned over an object near their looms. Some were expressive of pity, some of horror, but most were inclined to ridicule what appeared in the glass to be the form of a man leaning pectorally against the wall.

It was the close of a cold December day. The great factory was closed, a signal to close business that was strong of irony and aspect, sad and disengaged weavers were alike homeward bound.

A slight girlish form hurried toward the object of commotion. She placed a slender hand on man's arm and tenderly whispered, "Come father, let's go home." "That you, Lois?" said the figure with dishevelled hair staggered and recurred for support against the little which seemed scarcely able to bear her own weight. She gathered worn coat about him as the eyes met in the night air. A slight had fallen and the wind was blowing furiously. The magnificient factory buildings, the pride of the State, all aglow with electric light, were a grand relief in the bluish of the night, the lights silhouetting rays far down the dark alleys of the miserable tenement. The two figures plodded on, then reached a mean, dilated hut. A dim light revealed group of children huddled near the grate, some crying, some laughing at all started to hear voices from without and hushed to listen.

"It's Lois bringing fathehome drunk" said the largest boy jumping up to open the door. "Here father, this way," said the pleading voice, and Lois valvenered to show him the rays as the lights through the half open door shone full upon them.

"Here are all the children meet

your father, here's baby eng to

you, and little Alice waiting for

her kiss and John eager for story

come dear father and sit with us

the fire," she panted.

"Oh Katie, quiet baby as don't let him cry, it might mak father worse. Here Alice, I'll giv ye some bread in a minute."

"Ain't no bread," caught the beastly man haunted by the poverty even in his drunken sleep.

"But I'll make a fire, ou' come in," she panted.

"Ain't no fire," growled the man from without as he staggered away against the wall, and the little faces peered into the darkness at their drunken father.

"But I'll make a fire, ou' come in," she panted.

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